

WINCHESTER MODEL 70 SAFARI EXPRESS 375 H&H MAGNUM, \$1420

GUN TESTS GRADE: C+

Classic lines conceal a dead-feeling rifle. The M70 had enough weight — maybe too much — at 9.2 pounds. The cheekpiece and good recoil pad combined with its weight made the Winchester a comfortable rifle to shoot from the bench, even with modern hot Hornady Heavy Magnum loads. The metalwork and finish and stock work were excellent, though we didn't care for the free-floated barrel. The rifle had a few problems.



SPECIFICATIONS

Overall Length..... 45 in.
 Barrel Length..... 24 in.
 Sight Radius..... 18 in.
 Overall Height (no scope)..... 7.0 in.
 Length of Pull..... 13.9 in.
 Weight Unloaded..... 9.2 lbs.

Weight Loaded..... 9.5 lbs.
 Weight Scoped..... 9.9 lbs.
 Capacity..... 3+1
 Action Finish..... Matte Blued
 Action Type..... Bolt
 Barrel Finish..... Matte Blued
 Magazine Type..... Fixed Box

Stock..... Walnut
 Trigger Pull Weight..... 5.1 lbs.
 Warranty..... None Written
 Telephone..... (800) 322-4626
 Website..... WinchesterGuns.com



The huge gap around the guts of the new Model 70 trigger was not to our liking. All kinds of junk can get in there and foul up the works. The old trigger design was simple and superb and must have been less expensive to make than this one. So why change it?

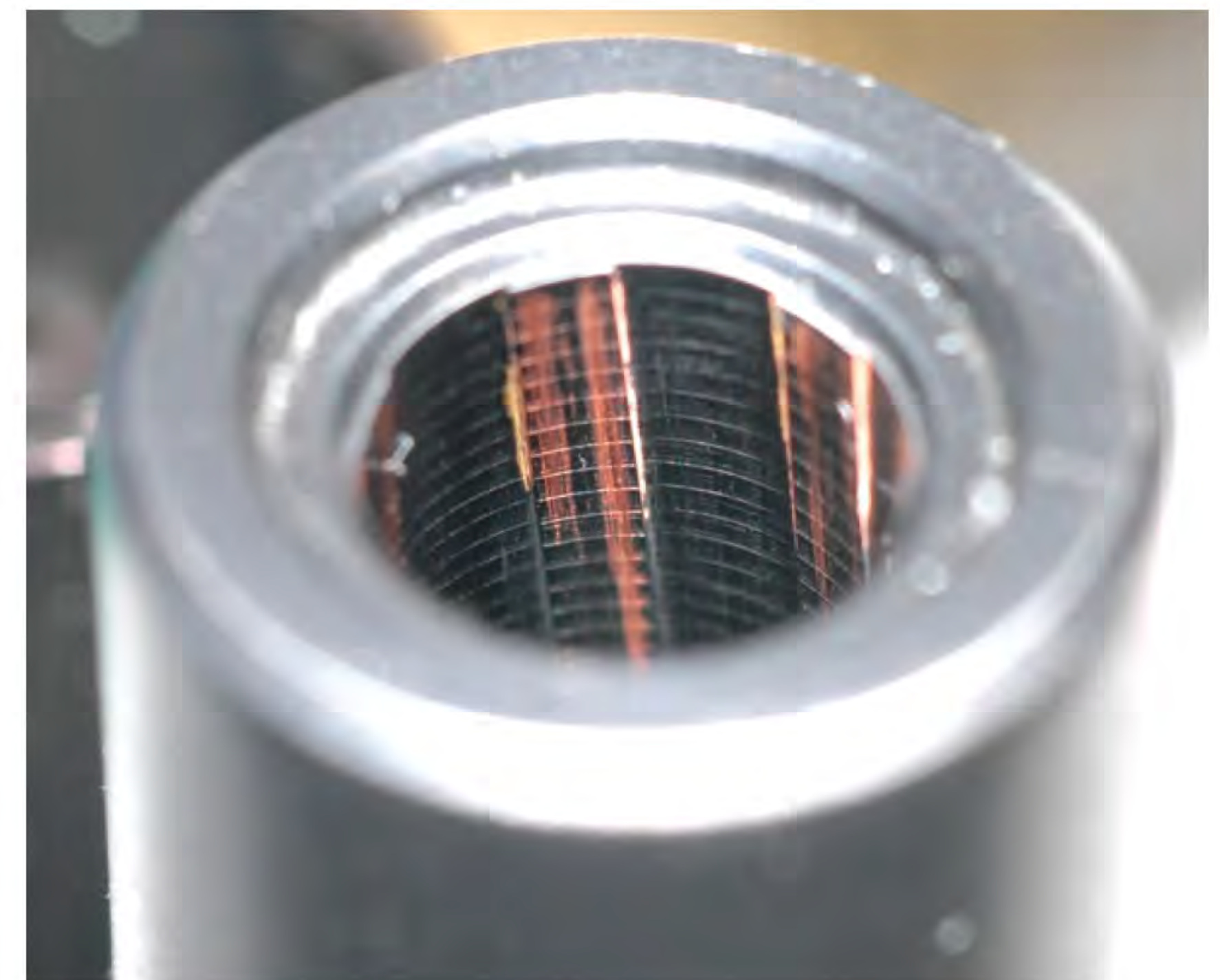


Those two crossbolts help keep the stock from splitting. We thought the stock was too thick at the wrist. The bolt handle had checkering at the knob, and its motion was very smooth. The checkering was excellent, though we didn't like the curved border at the wrist. The magazine release was in front of the trigger guard where it belongs.



This round shows a weak firing-pin strike on its primer. This happened several times with both factory and hand-loaded ammo. In all cases, the round fired the second time we tried it.

Right, top: The Winchester had a proper barrel-band front swivel. We liked it, and believe it's appropriate there unless you plan to shoot from a sling. That's not common for 375s but some do it. The barrel-mounted swivel will not cut your supporting hand on recoil. Right, bottom: We thought this was a classy job of installing a rear swivel stud on the Winchester.



Though the company claims to hammer-forge all its barrels, what the heck caused these chatter marks on the lands and in the grooves? Could it have been a button-rifling machine? At any rate, the rifle shot quite well. We did a small bit of firelapping to be able to clean this fouling out of the barrel.

